Let's Play Ball!!

Welcome Softball Umpires!

Hope everyone is enjoying their Regional Study Group sessions. This is a time to ask questions and refresh our rules knowledge before the live field play starts (with some cooperation from the weather). Hope everyone is planning on attending one of the Boot Camp training sessions.

I personally took away a couple new things from the boot camp that I will put in my “tool box”.

- Pointing to the foul side (initial mechanic) on foul fly balls close to the baseline seems to be something new last year that was depicted in the ASA videos.
- “Going out” (as the base umpire in two-person games) every time the situation warrants even with multiple runners on base. I had several incidences last year which has reinforced the importance of this mechanic.

Be sure to attend one of the Field Clinics scheduled in February. Also good way to get some live ball experience before tournament season gets underway is scheduling one (or more) of the several scrimmages soon to be available on self-assign.

COMING UP SOON:

- **USA Softball National Umpire School**
  - February 10th-12th (Fri-Sun) in Roseville.

GROUP LEADERSHIP CORNER

Congratulations! We have hit a benchmark for Registration. We now have broken the 100 barrier of fully registered members with several in process. Get your registration finished and help someone else join us as we move forward in the 2017 season to help our cause of providing the best possible umpiring to the players and coaches.
JSS SOFTBALL ASSIGNORS

JSS last year assigned (113 umpires) to approximately 1500 Varsity/JV softball games not including tournaments & playoffs. Our group assigns 90 schools, 62 of them have JV teams.

Of the 113 umpires, there are 24 #1 rated umpires, 28 are #2 rated, 50 are #3 rated and 11 are #4 rated. On any given day, there are 20-40 Varsity and 10-30 JV games assigned. Do the math, approximately 40-50 plate assignments per day, thus, 2's & 3"s at times will be assigned a JV game. Several #1 umpires worked JV games last year to fulfill the assignments for the day. If necessary, we may assign one (1) umpire to a Varsity game if necessary.

Of the 45 umpires selected for the playoffs by the Rating Committee, 42 were available and worked at least 2 games. 8 umpires were added by the Assignors, none of which were the college level umpires. There were 3 No Show's for the playoffs and 4 umpires worked extra games to fill in those assignments.

In 2017, the 1st round of the playoffs will be played at the high seed Host School. Only the finals will be played at the Sacramento Softball Complex and Arnaiz Stadium.

The season begins on February 28th with scrimmages the weekend prior; more information will be forthcoming. Please update your Arbiter calendar; keep it updated as your schedule changes. The mileage parameters are set at 75 miles for the 2017 season.

Game Reports: If you feel it's necessary, please complete a Game Report on Arbiter with all pertinent information, then email the Assignors about the incident/ejection/etc promptly as the League Commissioner and Athletic Director must be notified by JSS personally.

Thank you for your cooperation in 2106; looking forward to a great 2017 season.

IMPORTANT NEWS

Rule Clarifications from the State Rules Interpreter - Your leadership is getting clarifications from Vince Rossi, the CIF Rules Interpreter. Some of those are presented in this newsletter. Some will be coming out following our attendance at the State meeting with Vince. We are taking several issues that our membership has asked for clarification. We will report to the membership as we get information for you.

Webinars - Webinars will be posted on the website in February. Four webinar hours are required for your training plan to get your 18 hours of documented training for us to certify you to the CIF Assignors for assigning games. The 18 hours are state-wide requirements.

Training Options Adjusted - We have adjusted the training hour credits this year a little bit. We have included a credit of 2 hours of training time for NCAA training that is documented, non-paid, and actual training (not just scrimmages) to meet the CIF requirement. ASA training hour options are also available for those in multiple organizations. The ASA National Umpire School is in Sacramento this year. Sign up and get credit. See details in this Newsletter for the Training Hour options for 2017. It is your responsibility to communicate to us your training hours IN ADVANCE.
**Boot Camp Training Sessions** - The last session is Feb. 2nd. Only a few spaces are available. If you are interested in the jointly sponsored by NCOA and the Greater Sacramento Softball Association (GSSA or USA Softball Sacramento), contact us by email ASAP. macsports.14@gmail.com We are hosted once again by the Sunrise Recreation and Park District at their Rusch Park gym. Thanks to our own Robert Morris for all of the site arrangements and Don Heyde for heading up this training element.

**Regional Study Groups** – Week 1 has just completed with great attendance numbers. We will meet again regionally for an additional five weeks in Jan.-Feb. Four of the six sessions are required, so make sure you are on-track. Check for the specific locations on the Central Hub and in this newsletter.

**On-field Training Clinics** are back – Sessions are scheduled on Feb. 18, 20 & 25. Feb. 20th is full. Make sure you secure your spot to the 18th or 25th

**Rating Committee** – The Rating Committee has developed new tools for us to understand observations and standardize the points observers are looking for. Check it out on the website. The Committee is at full strength of the first time in three years. Rudy Aguillio, Mike Machovec and Phil Perkins were recently elected to join Pete Dufour and John Williams. Former Chair and current Co-Group Leader, Frank Moreno will be an advisor to the Committee. Many of the points are being incorporated into the Study Groups curriculum.

**Leadership Team** – The NCOA Softball Leadership Team is made up of elected and appointed NCOA members. The elected members are (with term expiration):

Co-Group Leaders – Frank Moreno (19) and Carl Clark (17)

NCOA Board representative – Bob Senchy (17)

Ombudsman – Phil Perkins (18)

Rating Committee – Rudy Aguillio (18), Pete Dufour (18), Mike Machovec (19), Phil Perkins (17) and John Williams (17).


**Elections** – Nominations are due by March 1st. There are four positions listed below that will be up for election this year:

Co-Group Leader (3-year term)

NCOA Board Representative (3-year term)

Rating Committee 2 positions (3-year terms)
**Uniform** - We have seen a couple of mistakes for uniforms. Buy the right uniform for softball. It is different from baseball. The official uniform for NCOA Softball is: Powder Blue (no logos) or Navy Shirt (color must match) (short or long sleeves); Heather Gray Slacks; Plain Navy Jacket (No stripes or piping; NCOA Hat; Heather Gray or Navy Ball Bag.

In that our brother Bernard Walker is on the IR list right now, your uniform contact will be Chuck Brabec. Email him at uic@sacramentoasa.org or call (916) 834-8074 for more information.

**Certification Test:** Opens January 8, 2017 on the **NFHS Tier 2 location (Group ID: 106237) on Arbiter.** Once there, click on the **TESTING** tab, find softball in the Open Tests section and have at it! The official closing date is March 31, 2017, however you must successfully pass this exam (80%) before you will receive any game assignments!

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**RULES CORNER**

**Study Session 1 brought some interesting dialog. Apparently, most groups did not agree on the answers for question 17.**

**It went like this:**

R1 is on 3rd Base with no outs. When B2 hits a fly ball to F9. Before F9 catches the ball, F5 yells "Go". R3 leaves third base early & scores.

The defensive team appeals that R3 left early. What's the call?

The printed answers were:

a. R3’s run scores.
b. F5 is charged with obstruction.
c. R3’s run is nullified.
d. F5 is ejected from the game.
e. There is no rule or interpretation to prevent “verbal obstruction” from occurring.

The correct answers were:

b. F5 is charged with obstruction.
c. R3’s run is nullified.

d. F5 is ejected from the game.

e. There is no rule or interpretation to prevent “verbal obstruction” from occurring.

The Training Team threw around some dialog and it went like this:

The question the class had was why do we nullify the run? I know we can’t assume she would have scored had she not left early, or had not been obstructed.

However, because of the obstruction, we could award R3 home, thus scoring. And we also know, that "all runners" are required to run the bases in legal order at all times, including awarded bases.

If we do award the runner home, would she now be in jeopardy of being called out on appeal because she left 3B early?

We also know that a runner cannot be called out between the bases she was obstructed (with
some exceptions that do not apply in this scenario). We could also simply put the runner back at 3rd, but that leads to the question, what if she has already touched home plate and has entered the dugout area? We know once a runner has scored, and entered the dugout area, they cannot go back to touch a base missed or left early.

My class wanted me to get more info on this scenario to help explain and clarify. I would be interested to know how this question was talked about in the various classes, and how the discussion went.

We had the same discussion with this question in our class last night and could not come to an agreement. You bring up all good points, very similar to our discussion. The problem we had was that we could not find supporting evidence for the answer in the Rule Book or Case Book.

We hesitated on this too in our group. I left the meeting feeling funny about what the answer sheet said... (B & C...that she's back at third, no run.) But maybe we can solve the mystery.

As you have probably seen by now, there is some incorrect and missing info on this question. The definition citation is correct (2-36). But the rule cite...8-4-3 should add "b" to the end of it, which gives you the basic obstruction call. And 8-4-3-j is something different entirely...no help there. The last line of the question also incorrectly states that the defensive team appealed that "R3 left early." There is no R3. So there are some mistakes to start with.

The mystery might be... the answer is a mistake too? I think it's A and B..., not B and C. She scores!

The third baseman tried to prevent the runner from scoring with a verbal obstruction. So since she "scored easily," you know she would have beat the play at the plate, and you award the base she would have reached had there been no obstruction. Home. Run scores.

"But...she left early!!!!!!" Yes she did, but why did she leave early? The logic is that the obstruction caused the leaving early violation. We can't reward the bad behavior of the 3rd baseman. Remember, she wasn't physically obstructed, she was verbally obstructed BEFORE she left the base. Rule 2-36 says you can have verbal obstruction. (Put this stuff in your "script" to the coach.)

It seems logical that you cannot cause unfairness, and then benefit from it. It would be like in basketball calling a foul on a player for pushing an opponent with the ball out of bounds, but then awarding possession of the ball to the team that fouled because the other guy was out of bounds!

If she would have been out at home plate, you could put her back at third. But in this case, she apparently had no problem beating the play.

So then you start looking at missing information. Where's the runner? They don't place the runner, so they must feel she gets home. How many outs? They don't say, because obviously if she scores, there's only one out.

Funny...in a mystery novel, you look for clues to solve the missing information. Here, we are using the missing information as a clue!

Going out on a limb, but guessing this NFHS quiz answer is wrong. It should be A and B.

After running this dialog past the State Rules Interpreter, his answer was:

Discussion is always good and in this case your group is right. Correct answer should have been A&B
Obstruction occurred and it would be the responsibility of the umpire to award the base(s) the runner would have made if the obstruction hadn’t occurred. Since it was the defense that cause the “infraction” by the runner, the obstruction would overrule the “infraction.” The run should be allowed.

As a side note, you’re the first Unit (Statewide!) to question that one.

Keep up the good work!

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A second situation was brought to my attention and went like this:

When you have a runner that is attempting to score but does not touch home plate during the play, the catcher has possession of the ball and “inadvertently” steps on home plate, do you award the out on appeal?

Again, the State Rules Interpreter was brought in and said:

The catcher in this case needs to acknowledge to the umpire that she’s appealing the runner missed home. At that point, yes, the out can be recorded.

Please bring all of these situations to me and I’ll get clarification! Happy Officiating!!

NEW WEEKLY QUIZ

Each newsletter will include a 10-15 question true/false quiz for your enjoyment. Answers are included in the same issue.

1. Since the head coach verifies that a team’s equipment is legal, the plate umpire need not ensure that the umpires inspect bats and helmets.

2. A pitched ball hits a batter within the batter’s box and the batter makes no attempt to avoid being hit. The batter is awarded first base.

3. The penalty for interference on a batted ball is the same whether it is by an on-deck batter or a blocked ball is caused by offensive team equipment.

4. When a base has been dislodged from its proper position, runners must still touch or follow the base out of position.

5. Obstruction is called on F2 when she is about to receive the ball while blocking home plate, and comes in contact with the runner sliding into home.

6. A runner is out if a fair-batted ball strikes her after it passes a fielder (other than the pitcher) and the umpire judges that no other fielder has a play.

7. B1, the pitcher, hits a single and advances to second on the next play. Her coach may replace her with a courtesy runner at this time.

8. Any defensive fielder may make a live-ball appeal with the ball in her possession by tagging the runner or touching the base that was missed or left too early.
9. Prior to pitching, the pitcher must take a position with the shoulders in line with first and third bases with the ball in the glove or pitching hand and with the hands separated.

10. While in the pitching position, the pitcher must take (or simulate taking) a signal from the catcher.

11. A team’s lineup card must include each starting player’s first initial and last name, jersey number, position and batting order.

12. An umpire’s decision involving fair/foul call or a safe/out call may be appealed by requesting assistance from another umpire.

13. Once a defensive position is established in an inning, a player may not switch to another defensive position.

14. Substitution rules are in effect after the umpire-in-chief accepts the lineup cards from both coaches before the game.

15. Ground rules for a specific field, park or location may supersede a rule in the Federation Softball Rules Book.

**ANSWERS**

1. ANS: F  REF: 10-2-3a
2. ANS: T  REF: 8-1-2 penalty 1
3. ANS: T  REF: 8-2-13
4. ANS: F  REF: 8-3-5
5. ANS: T  REF: 8-4-3b; 2-36
6. ANS: F  REF: 8-6-11; 8-8-4
7. ANS: T  REF: 8-9-1
8. ANS: T  REF: 2-1-3a
9. ANS: T  REF: 6-1-1a
10. ANS: T  REF: 6-1-1b
11. ANS: T  REF: 3-1-3
12. ANS: F  REF: 10-1-4
13. ANS: F  REF: 3-1-6
14. ANS: T  REF: 4-1-2b
15. ANS: F  REF: 4-1-3
# Softball – Sacramento
2017 Training Options
(Updated 12/1/16)

## Training Options (18 hr. Required by CIF/SJS)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Hrs.</th>
<th>Total Req. Hrs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All Umpires</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Groups 4 of 6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2 ea</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>Classification Exam</td>
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<tr>
<td>Webinar sessions 4 of 6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1 ea</td>
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<td><strong>Required for New umps &amp; optional for 200-500 Ratings</strong></td>
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<td>On-Field Clinic</td>
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<td>5 ea</td>
<td>5</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Required for New umps &amp; optional for 200-500 Ratings</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Basic Skills Boot Camp</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Optional Training Hours</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>General Meeting</td>
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<td>Vet. Scrimmages (verified)(2 max)</td>
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<td>2 ea</td>
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<tr>
<td>On-field Clinic (if space available)</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boot Camp (if space available)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Guide (80% +)</td>
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<td>Xtra Study Group</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>GSSA Clinic</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA / USAS National School</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>ASA/USAS National Fast Pitch School</td>
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<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>NCAA Clinic (verified)(non paid)</td>
<td></td>
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**NOTE:**
* Required sessions can be made up with approval of the Group Leaders on a case-by-case basis with an agreed upon training plan.
* It is the responsibility of the umpire to submit an email request for an alternate training plan.
# 2017 TENTATIVE MEETING SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Day Time</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan 10</td>
<td>Tuesday 6pm</td>
<td>General Meeting</td>
<td>Jesuit High School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan 12</td>
<td>Thursday 6pm</td>
<td>Basic Skills Boot Camp #2</td>
<td>Rusch Park Gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jan-Feb</td>
<td>MTWTh 6:30pm</td>
<td>NCOA Study Group Sessions</td>
<td>see chart</td>
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<td>Feb 2</td>
<td>Thursday 6pm</td>
<td>Basic Skills Boot Camp #3</td>
<td>Rusch Park Gym</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 10-12</td>
<td>Fri-Sun</td>
<td>USA Softball National Umpire</td>
<td>Roseville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 18</td>
<td>Saturday 8am</td>
<td>Field Clinic #1</td>
<td>Vanden High School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb 20</td>
<td>Monday 8am</td>
<td>Field Clinic #2</td>
<td>TBA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 25</td>
<td>Saturday 8am</td>
<td>Field Clinic #3</td>
<td>Freedom Park</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 5</td>
<td>Sunday 9am</td>
<td>GSSA Umpire Clinic</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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Sunrise Recreation & Park District  
Rusch Park Gym  
7801 Auburn Blvd.  
Citrus Heights, CA 95610

Jesuit High School  
1200 Jacob Lane  
Carmichael, CA 95608

Vanden High School  
2951 Markley Lane  
Fairfield, CA 94533

Freedom Park  
2802 Perrin Avenue  
McClellan, CA 95652
# 2017 Study Group Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Facilitators</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza 2345 Sunset Blvd Rocklin</td>
<td>1/16, 1/23, 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 2/20</td>
<td>Phil Perkins, Gary Butler</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza 2105 Town Center Plaza #F-180 West Sacramento</td>
<td>1/16, 1/23, 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 2/20</td>
<td>Frank Moreno, Kevin Nicholson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday</td>
<td>Denny's Restaurant 1800 Auburn Ravine Road Auburn</td>
<td>1/16, 1/23, 1/30, 2/6, 2/13, 2/20</td>
<td>Pete Dufour, Greg Walker</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza 2234 Sunrise Blvd Rancho Cordova</td>
<td>1/17, 1/24, 1/31, 2/7, 2/14, 2/21</td>
<td>Jim Halstead, Rich Reynolds</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza 5110 Laguna Blvd #119 Elk Grove</td>
<td>1/17, 1/24, 1/31, 2/7, 2/14, 2/21</td>
<td>Kevin Okino, Kevin Nicholson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza 8795 Elk Grove Blvd Elk Grove</td>
<td>1/18, 1/25, 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22</td>
<td>Jack Wendell, George Green</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza 4949-C Marconi Avenue Sacramento</td>
<td>1/18, 1/25, 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22</td>
<td>Rick Post, Dennis O'Leary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza 2345 Sunset Blvd Rocklin</td>
<td>1/18, 1/25, 2/1, 2/8, 2/15, 2/22</td>
<td>Rudy Aguillio</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td>Round Table Pizza 888 Alamo Drive Vacaville</td>
<td>1/19, 1/26, 2/2, 2/9, 2/16, 2/23</td>
<td>Al Weihe</td>
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* All meeting times are 6:30 to 8:30 pm *

* You are required to attend 4 of the 6 sessions, 1 a week *